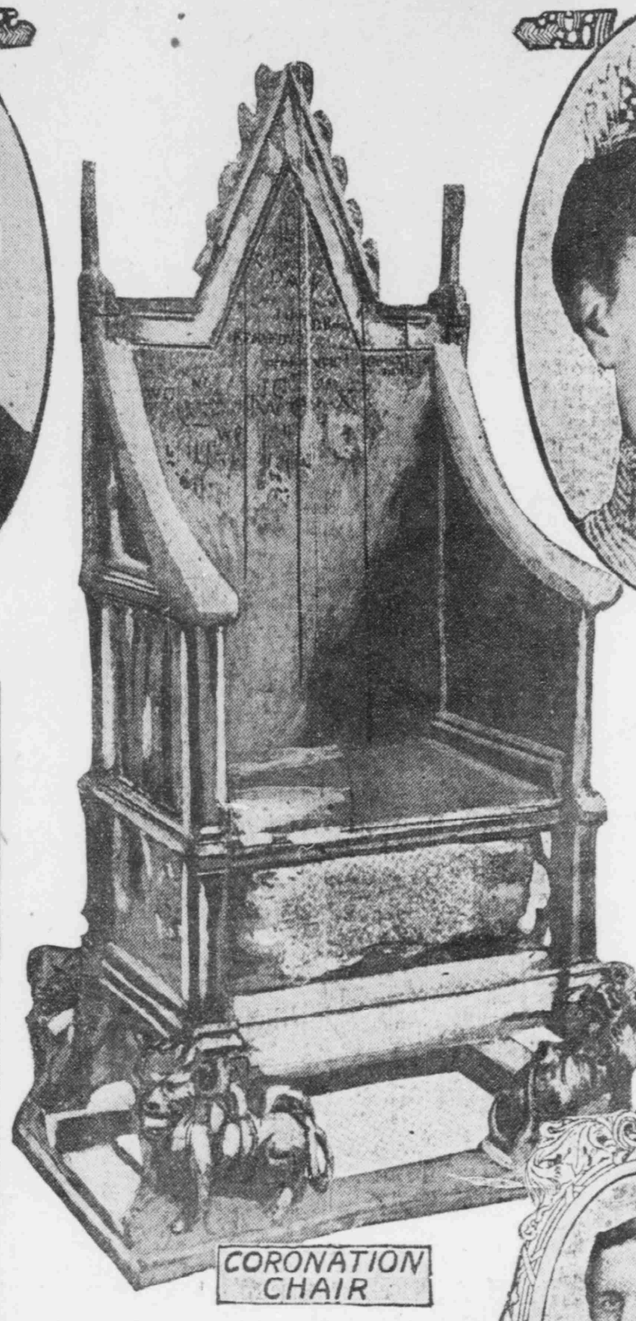
SIDELIGHTS ON THE WORLD'S NEWS

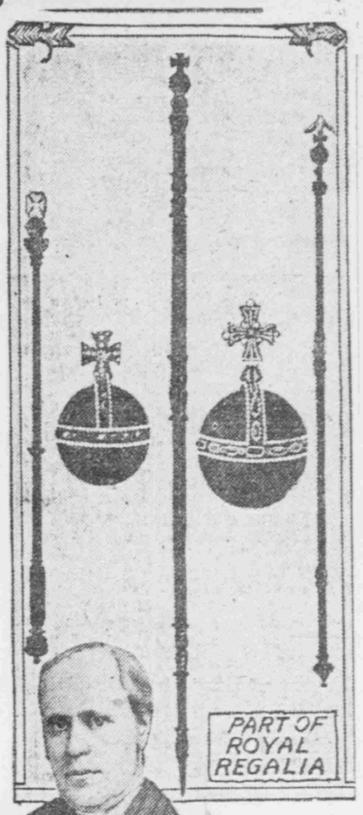
When a New King Ascends England's Throne

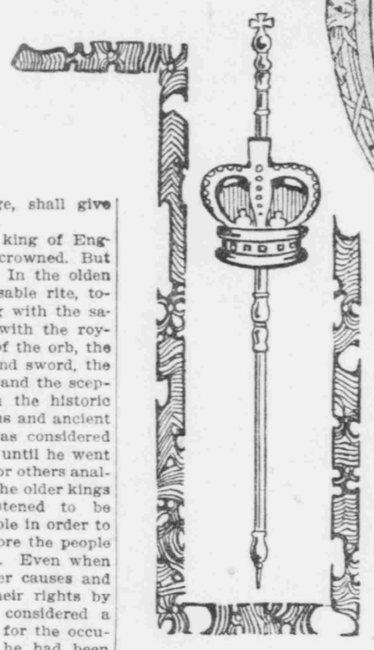
By CHARLES N. LURIE.

"DOES the death of a king of England mean the immediate accession of a full fledged ruler, or is the new sovereign not invested with his full dignity until he is crowned king in Westminster abbey?" is a question which was asked frequently by Americans when Queen Victoria died and was revived when King George V. came recently to his throne. In answer it may be said briefly that "the king of England never dies;" that the death of one possessor of the crown invests his heir immediately with all the dignities, honors and privileges, together with the duties, that have accumulated for the holder of the title in eight centuries and more. The passing of a king is known legally as "the demise of the crown"—that is, the crown passes, but its wearer never passes away. Thus, when King Edward breathed his last in the presence of his family, among whom was, of course, his only surviving son, the Prince of Wales, England at that moment came into possession of a new king. No formal notification was necessary, but it may be assumed that the new monarch's subjects present at King Edward's death paid homage, immediate, if sorrowful, to King George V.

A really important feature of the accession of a new king and one that overshadows the coronation in its bearing on the affairs of the great British empire, but not in spectacular impressiveness, is the taking of the oath of allegiance by the privy council and the address of the new king to the council. In it he promises to govern the empire in accordance with constitutional requirements and limitations. That does not make him king—it is his right of birth that gives him the title—but it fixes his place in the scheme of government of the British islands and the colonies.







The Oath of Allegiance.

The councilors' oath of allegiance is a curious and interesting survival of ancient phraseology. In it they "with one voice and the consent of tongue and heart publish and proclaim that the high and mighty Prince George is now, by the death of our late sovereign of happy memory, become our only lawful and rightful liege lord, George V., by the grace of God, king of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, defender of the faith and emperor of India, to whom we do acknowledge all faith and constant obedience, with all hearty and humble affection, beseeching God, by whom kings and queens do reign, to bless the royal prince George V. with long and happy years to reign over us."

After the proclamation the new king addressed the council and promised to reign as constitutional sovereign. Then the king issued a proclamation requiring all officers to proceed with their regular duties. The aldermen of London also swore allegiance at the meeting of the councilors.

Another very interesting if not very important ceremonial that follows immediately upon the death of a British sovereign is the proclamation throughout the kingdom of his successor. From the steps of the Royal Exchange in London the crowd was officially informed of a fact that they already knew through newspapers and mouth to mouth reports—that their king was dead and another reigned in his place. After the meeting of the privy councilors with the king other formal proclamations of the sort were made by heralds and their pursuivants, with the usual accompaniments of fanfares of trumpets, in the quadrangle of Buckingham palace and repeated in Charing Cross, Temple Bar and Cheapside. Similar scenes were enacted throughout Great Britain and Ireland.

The wording of the proclamation of the new king in London was as follows:

"Whereas it has pleased Almighty God to call to his mercy our late sovereign lord King Edward, of blessed and glorious memory, by whose decease the imperial crown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is solely and rightfully come to the high and mighty prince George Frederick, we therefore, the lords spiritual and temporal of this realm, being here assembled with these of his late majesty's privy council, with numbers of other principal gentlemen of quality, with the lord mayor, aldermen and citizens of London, do now hereby, with one voice and consent of tongue and heart, publish and proclaim that the high and mighty prince George Frederick is now, by the death of our late sovereign of happy memory, become our only lawful and rightful liege lord George V., by the grace of God king of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, defender of the faith, emperor of India, to whom we do acknowledge all faith and constant obedience, with all hearty and humble affection, beseeching God, by whom kings and queens do reign, to bless the royal prince George V. with long and happy years to reign over us." It will be seen that the proclamation resembles closely that of the privy councilors.

The Purpose of the Coronation.

If the coronation of a new king is not a necessary concomitant of his accession to the throne and he is de facto and de jure king months before the stately ceremonial in Westminster abbey, of what use is the coronation? The answer is simple—it serves as a focusing point for the expressions of fealty from all parts of the empire. To see the new monarch crowned come delegations from the farthest corners of the earth, wherever the flag of Britain flies. Princes whose domains, formerly independent, are now tributary to Great Britain send representatives to attest to their loyalty to the "great king" or go themselves, attended by all the state they can muster. Foreign nations send men of the highest rank to show their friendliness for Great Britain. The great men of the empire and those with titles assemble in Westminster abbey to swear fealty to their new "sovereign lord and king."

Nowhere else in all the world, save perhaps at the crowning of an emperor of Russia, may so imposing and splendid a scene be witnessed as that in Westminster abbey when the archbishop of Canterbury, actual head of the Church of England, of which the king is titular head, places on his head the crown and invokes him as follows:

"Be strong and of a good courage, observe the commandments of God and walk in his holy ways, fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life, that in this world you may be crowned with success and honor and when you have finished your course receive a crown of righteousness which God, the righteous Judge, shall give you in that day. Amen."

As has been said, the king of England is king before he is crowned. But this was not always so. In the olden days it was an indispensable rite, together with the anointing with the sacred oil, the investiture with the royal robe and the delivery of the orb, the presenting of the spurs and sword, the investiture with the ring and the scepter, the enthronement in the historic chair and the other curious and ancient ceremonials. No king was considered firmly fixed in his throne until he went through these ceremonies or others analogous to them. Some of the older kings of England indeed hastened to be crowned as soon as possible in order to establish more firmly before the people their rights to the crown. Even when other claimants had better causes and proceeded to establish their rights by might of sword it was considered a great point of advantage for the occupant of the throne that he had been duly and solemnly crowned. With the modern establishment of undisputed lines of descent and the remoteness of the possibility of any one instituting a successful contest for the throne the coronation has lost its importance, but has gained in impressiveness and stateliness from the months of preparation that are now devoted to giving it a proper "state setting."

King Not a Figurehead.

The delay does not impair the loyalty of any one. When the coronation arrives it helps to impress on the people the great dignity and importance and power of the king. He is not a figurehead, as has been stated many times, but has definite and assigned duties and functions in the government of the world's greatest empire that make him a busier man than the great majority of his subjects. To cite only one thing, and that seemingly a little one, the sovereign of England is "the fountainhead of all honor." As such it falls upon him to confer titles and dignities of all sorts, and he is of course consulted before any high office in the far stretching British empire is filled. To what extent this function of the crown means work and hard work may be inferred from the fact that it has been stated very frequently of late that in the event of the house of lords refusing to give assent to the abridgement of its power the king would be called upon to create a number of Liberal peers sufficiently large to overcome their opposition. It may be doubted that any British statesman would feel easy if called upon to shoulder the responsibility of deciding upon conferring titles upon several scores of eminent Britons, all to be of the same political beliefs.

In the words of a recent writer, "the king is the supreme head of the state in peace and war, the lord paramount of the soil, the fountain of justice and honor and the supreme head of the church. The king also has the prerogative of rejecting bills in parliament, which, however, has not been exercised for some 200 years. As the generalissimo, or the first in military command within the kingdom, he has the sole power of raising and regulating fleets and armies, which, however, is virtually controlled by the necessity he is under of obtaining supplies from parliament. As the fountain of justice and general conservator of the peace of the kingdom he alone has the right of erecting courts of judicature, and all jurisdictions of courts are derived from the crown. As the fountain of honor, of office and of privilege he has the power of conferring dignities, privileges, offices, etc. In the foreign relations of the nation he is considered the nation's representative and makes treaties, declares war, etc. As advisers he has the privy cabinet [a permanent body] and the cabinet [which is composed of members of the majority party in the house of commons]. In the cabinet are included all the greater officers of state, such as the first lord of the treasury, the secretaries of state for foreign affairs, for the home department, for the colonies and for India and others, and thus the cabinet is in reality at the head of the administration; consequently it forms a link between the legislative and executive departments of the state."

The Place of the Queen.

While the king is thus invested with numerous and important duties, it is different with his consort, the queen. Although she is the wife of the reigning sovereign and as such the head of British society, she has no legal status higher than that of any other wife. The British constitution does not recognize her, and she has no duties other than those which the king may be pleased to assign to her, as he may to any other subject. The word "subject' is used advisedly. She is only a "subject" of his majesty, in that respect being only on a par with his millions of other subjects. This is of course theoretically. Actually the queen wields great power through her control of the favor of society. And at the coronation she is a splendid and conspicuous figure, for after the crown is placed upon the brows of her husband by the archbishop of Canterbury, "primate of all England," she is invested with her own crown by the archbishop of York, who is known officially as "the primate of England." She stands then at the head of the peeresses of the realm in virtue of her husband's majesty, just as the setting of the crown upon his head is the signal for the self crowning with coronets of all the dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons of the realm.

That is the only time when these persons of title wear their coronets, and there are nice distinctions among the various ranks in the matter of these minor crowns. A duke's coronet must have a certain number of strawberry leaves, and a viscount's must contain a certain number of balls, many balls and so on. It is all a matter of the survival of ancient customs and laws.

If there remains in the world today a ceremonial marked more than any other by the survival of ancient customs and observances it is the coronation of a British sovereign. Every minute step in the ordering of the rites is bound and circumscribed with a most worshipful regard for precedent and privilege, and the questions to be decided by the earl marshal of England, the chief official in charge of the coronation, are manifold in their number and intricacy. The hereditary earl marshal of the kingdom of England is the Duke of Norfolk, the premier peer of the realm, who is the head of the historic house of Howard. In these degenerate days, when business has taken the place of war and pomp, the earl marshal of England has little to do save at the coronation of a new king, but in the olden days, when sovereigns went forth to war themselves, he was one of the most important officials of the kingdom. He still has certain defined duties that have to do with the granting of titles, coats of arms, etc., but the duties devolve mainly upon subordinates.

From the popular or purely spectacular point of view "the pageant and ceremony of a coronation in England" consist of the splendid scene in Westminster abbey when the new monarch is anointed, robed and crowned and the scenes in the streets of London, with parades, speeches and bonfires; the actual rite and ceremony—that is to say, of the coronation itself—and the state procession of the sovereign to and from Westminster and Buckingham palace. Some of these are intended for the populace, but of course the coronation in the abbey and the great coronation banquet are only for the elect. Some persons, such as the peers of the realm, the lords spiritual as well as temporal, and the officials have hereditary or prescribed rights to admission to the coronation and the banquet. Others must rely on their influence with the aforesaid officials or on their social standing for the highly coveted tickets of admission. The rest of the London populace is permitted and indeed expected to line the route of the new sovereign's procession and cheer lustily as he passes.

This part of the program is never omitted, for the people of "the king's most loyal city of London" are extraordinarily fond of shows and parades and processions of all sorts—this in spite of the city's theoretical independence of the sovereign, for London is a "free city," and even the king himself or his messengers cannot formally enter its precincts without the permission of the lord mayor. London is jealous of this prerogative, and the officials never fail to assert it on solemn or formal occasions.

This was well illustrated three days after King Edward's death, when the heralds sent to the city to proclaim the accession of King George were halted at Temple Bar, the substitute for the old gates of the city, which were locked against the king's messengers. A red cord stretched across the street preserved the way into the ancient city of London. It was not until the lord mayor gave permission for the heralds to proceed that they could enter the city without breaking the laws and customs of many centuries.

THE BOY SCOUT MOVEMENT INVADES AMERICA

These are our regulations—
There's just one law for the scout,
And the first and the last, and the present and the past,
And the future and the perfect is "Look out!"

Look out when your temper goes
At the end of a losing game,
And your boots are too tight for your toes,
And you answer and argue and blame.

It's the hardest point of the law,
But it has to be learned by the scout—
For whining and shirking and "jaw"
All patrols look out!
—Kipling's "Scout Song."

TO be manly, to be upright, strong, courageous and patriotic—such is the obligation voluntarily placed upon himself by a youth who becomes a "boy scout." A true boy scout assumes these obligations gladly, without outside compulsion, having seen what good effects they have wrought in other boys. He is not a boy scout primarily because he sees in his membership in the corps direct benefits for himself, but because he wishes to use it as a means to the end of rising to the full stature of a devoted, loyal son of the republic.

There are not yet in this country many boy scouts, but there will be soon considerable bodies of them. Determined, intelligent efforts are being made here to establish corps similar to those that have been so successful in Great Britain.

While the boy scout movement in Great Britain and its dependencies had its inception in the German war scare, when every day the lookouts on the British coast scanned the horizon for the smoke of a hostile war fleet and when every member of a German waiters' union in London was believed to be a spy of the kaiser, the civic usefulness of training youths in semi-military fashion was not overlooked. The value of the upbuilding of the youth of the empire physically, mentally and morally by the training process received warm recognition and support by British parents from the very beginning of the movement, and there are now more than 200,000 British boy scouts. They are exercised in all branches of woodcraft and in close observation, in the principles of first aid to the injured and the wounded, in signaling, in the hasty preparation of food and shelter, in the pitching of camps, the building of bridges and the use of the heliograph, the tying of various kinds of knots, the loading of pack animals and, in short, in a thousand and one matters of practical utility.

So much for the physical training of the corps. Some idea of the moral value of its development may be gained from the following "nine points of the boy scout's law:"

First.—A scout's honor is to be trusted.

Second.—A scout is loyal to his officers, to his country and to his employers.

Third.—A scout's duty is to be useful and to help others.

Fourth.—A scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other scout, no matter to what social class the other belongs.

Fifth.—A scout is courteous.

Sixth.—A scout is a friend to animals.

Seventh.—A scout obeys orders of his patrol leader or scout master without question.

Eighth.—A scout smiles and whistles under all circumstances.

Ninth.—A scout is thrifty.

The pledge that the boy scout takes is:

"I will do my duty to God and my country. I will do my best to help others, whatever it costs me. I know the scout law and will obey it."

The British lads throughout the empire have taken very kindly indeed to the idea. The elements of chivalry and mutual self helpfulness appeal to them strongly, and their patriotism is aroused by the idea that their training helps to fit them for active service in the army and navy if the empire needs them. There are naval boy scouts in Great Britain as well as those who operate on land, and the movement, which is only about three years old, has spread with wonderful rapidity to outlying portions of the empire. There are organized bodies of the lads in South Africa, in the British colonies in China and elsewhere. There are girl scouts as well as boy scouts, but not so many of them.

The originator of the boy scout movement is Lieutenant General Sir Robert S. Baden-Powell, the famous soldier of the Boer war, who was the "hero of Mafeking." The suggestion is believed to have come to him through the success of the organization of the boys of the beleaguered town during its siege by the Boers, when the lads rendered good service by carrying water, helping to care for the wounded and in other ways. He took back to England with him the idea of forming the youth of the empire into a force auxiliary to the army, with distinctive uniforms and specific duties, that should be a power for good in the future of the empire. Persons enthusiastic in the cause of the boy scouts profess to see in the movement the remedy for the physical degeneration of British city dwellers that has given so many anxious hours to patriotic scientists of the empire.

The boy scouts of Great Britain are called out to go into camp for several days at a time. They receive there the benefits of the outdoor training that constitutes an important part of their experience. Their interest in the work is stimulated by visits and inspections by the higher officers of the corps and by competitive exercises of various kinds.

In America one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the movement to establish here similar bodies of boys is Ernest Thompson Seton, the well known writer and naturalist, who has devoted much time to a study of the movement and the possibility of adapting it to American conditions. This summer he is to conduct an experimental camp of boys at Silver Bay, Lake George, N. Y. He will assemble 120 boys over fifteen years of age from twenty of the leading associations of the country and instill into them the principles and instruct them in the methods of the boy scout movement. Mr. Seton expects to spread thus throughout the United States the knowledge of what the boy scouts are and what they hope to accomplish. There are already here two bodies of boys similar to those of England—one in Paterson, N. J., known as the Rattlesnake patrol, and the other in Springfield, Mass. The idea has proved very popular in these two cities, and the youngsters take great delight in their camping and hiking experiences.

That is the strong point of the boy scout idea. It appeals not only to the parents as a means of making manly men of their boys, but it appeals strongly to the boys themselves.

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